REMARKS

By this Amendment, claims 1, 8 and 15 are cancelled, and claims 7, 14 and 16 are amended. Thus, claims 7, 14 and 16 are active in the application. Reexamination and reconsideration of the application are respectfully requested.

In item 3 on page 2 of the Office Action, claims 1, 8 and 15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Holman (U.S. 5,287,181). This rejection is believed to be moot with respect to the cancellation of claims 1, 8 and 15.

In item 5 on page 3 of the Office Action, claims 7, 14 and 16 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Holman in view of McCollom et al. (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2002/0010623, hereinafter "McCollom").

Without intending to acquiesce to this rejection, claims 7, 14 and 16 have each been amended to more clearly illustrate the marked differences between the present invention and the applied references. Accordingly, the Applicants respectfully submit that the present invention is patentable over the applied references for the following reasons.

Conventional viewing information services use advertising media to develop interest in products or services. For example, in the case of a fast-food company selling a new hamburger, discount coupons for the hamburger are distributed on the street to individuals together with advertising handbills. When an individual who has received the discount coupon goes to the fast-food company and presents the coupon, he or she can receive a discount on the price of the new hamburger. Alternatively, an individual could go to the fast-food company's website to print out a coupon for the new hamburger and bring the printed coupon to receive a discount for the new hamburger.

However, an individual cannot obtain a discount (or other service) at the fast-food company unless he or she has actually received the advertisement on the street or accessed the company's website to print out the discount coupon. Therefore, even if the individual has viewed a commercial (CM) of the fast-food company on the television (TV), he or she cannot receive the discount without proving that he or she viewed the commercial on the TV.

Therefore, the present invention provides a receiver and a viewing information recording method and program which can record viewing information on a removable

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recording medium to indicate that a viewer has viewed a program or CM that was broadcast on television.

The receiver comprises a program acceptor for accepting, from a broadcast station, a network or the Internet, program contents and program information having a program identifier to identify the broadcast program contents. The receiver also comprises a display unit for displaying the program contents, and a viewing information recorder for storing the program identifier of the program contents accepted by the program acceptor.

Furthermore, the receiver of the present invention comprises an input acceptor for accepting a user input. In particular, the input acceptor accepts, as the user input, program related information that is inputted by a user via a keyboard or touchpad, or transmitted from the user via a remote control, for example. When the program related information accepted by the input acceptor matches program related information supplied from a provider of the program contents, the viewing information recorder comprised in the receiver records, on a removable recording medium, viewing information having the program identifier to identify the program contents.

By this arrangement, if the user is watching television and sees a CM (program contents) for a particular product, for example, the user can command that a coupon, as viewing information pertaining to the CM, be recorded on the removable recording medium. Therefore, a coupon, as viewing information indicating that the user has watched a particular program or CM, can be recorded on the removable recording medium, and the user can bring the removable recording medium to a store to present the recorded coupon to obtain a discount on a selected product or service.

The present invention provides that the program related information is information which is related to the contents of the program that the user watches. The program related information, however, is not a keyword for a search. For example, as described beginning at line 6 on page 42 of the substitute specification (line 22 on page 42 of the original specification), the name of a fast-food company or its abbreviation when the user is watching a CM of the fast-food company, or textual or numerical characters that are indicated in the program contents.

In addition, the present invention provides that the input acceptor determines

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whether or not the program related information inputted by the user is correct. In particular, as described beginning at line 16 on page 42 of the substitute specification (line 7 on page 43 of the original specification), the <u>input acceptor determines whether or not the program related information inputted by the user matches program related information supplied from the provider of the program contents</u>. For example, as illustrated in Figure 12, if the user inputs "ABC Burger" as program related information for a new hamburger being advertised in a CM (program contents) while the user is watching or after the user has watched the CM, the input acceptor determines that the program related information matches the program related information supplied from the provider of the program contents (e.g., the fast-food company that is selling the ABC Burger, the advertising company which created the CM for the ABC Burger, or the entity who supplied the program contents to the user).

Therefore, the present invention provides that viewing information (e.g., coupon) is recorded on a removable recording medium by the viewing information recorder only when the input acceptor determines that the user has inputted program related information that matches the program related information of the program contents supplied from a provider of the program contents. Thus, the present invention provides that the viewing information recorder does <u>not</u> record viewing information to the removable recording medium if the user does not input program related information that matches the program related information supplied from a provider of the program contents. This feature of the present invention ensures that the individuals must pay attention to program contents such as CMs in order to be able to obtain discounts or other services for watching the program contents.

Claims 7, 14 and 16 have each been amended to emphasize this feature of the present invention. In particular, claim 7 has been amended to recite that the input acceptor is for <u>accepting program related information</u> as a user input, and <u>determining whether or not the program related information inputted by the user matches program related information supplied from a provider of the program contents</u>. Further, claim 7 has been amended to recite that the viewing information recorder is for recording, on a removable recording medium, viewing information having the program identifier to identify the program contents <u>when the input acceptor determines that the program</u>

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related information inputted by the user matches the program related information supplied from the provider of the program contents. The method of claim 14 and the program of claim 16 were amended similar to claim 7.

Holman discloses an electronic redeemable coupon system that encodes coupon-related data in television signals to be displayed on a television screen. The system of Holman includes a decoder for decoding coupon-related data from the television signals and displaying the coupon-related data on the user's television. When a commercial is shown, a logo or emblem 40 is shown on the television screen. If the viewer is interested in the product that is the subject of the commercial identified by the logo or emblem 40, the viewer presses a VIEW button 9 on a home unit 1, and a message 8 is decoded from the television signal and displayed at the bottom of the television screen. Holman discloses that the message 8 may inform the viewer that the manufacturer of the product or the sponsor of the commercial has an electronic coupon that is available to be redeemed (see Column 6, lines 5-23 and Figures 1-2).

Holman discloses that if the viewer wishes to take advantage of the electronic coupon, the viewer 11 will press the COUPON button 11 on the home unit 1, which causes the home unit 1 to memorize the coupon-related data and display a confirmation signal by altering the color of the logo or emblem 40 of the product being advertised. The viewer can continue to push the VIEW button 9 each time that he or she is interested in an advertised product to determine whether an electronic coupon for that product is redeemable (see Column 6, lines 24-38 and Figures 1-2).

Holman further discloses that when the viewer wishes to redeem the electronically stored coupons, the viewer presses the DISPLAY LIST button 13 on the home unit 1, which causes a list of all the accumulated electronic coupons to be displayed on the television screen. Then, the viewer can review the displayed list to determine which coupons he or she is interested in. In particular, Holman discloses that the viewer pushes a MARK button 6 on the home unit 1 for each coupon in the displayed list that the viewer is interested in redeeming. Once all desired coupons have been marked by using the MARK button 6, the user presses a LOAD COUPON button 19 while a recording medium is swiped through a magnetic card writer to record the electronic coupons on the recording medium. The viewer then takes the recording medium to a store to redeem the

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coupons (see Column 6, lines 39-64).

Accordingly, Holman merely discloses that electronic coupons are extracted from television signals when a viewer views commercials and selects that the coupon-related data be stored so as to be recorded to a magnetic card.

Furthermore, as acknowledged by the Examiner, Holman does not disclose or suggest that an input acceptor accepts program related information that matches program related information supplied from a program provider.

In an attempt to teach this feature of the present invention, the Examiner applied McCollum. McCollum discloses a network system in which coupons are published, distributed and redeemed. In particular, McCollum discloses that a merchant server 26 allows a merchant to transmit requests to create a coupon for a product of the merchant, and transmit coupon data regarding the creation of a coupon. A commerce server 23 receives the requests to create a coupon, and receives the coupon creation data. In addition, the commerce server 23 saves the coupon data to a coupon database, and provides customers using workstations 12-15 access to the coupons over the network. That is, the commerce server 23 provides a central site for the customers to be able to communicate with the merchant server 26 (see paragraph [0056]).

However, McCollum is markedly different from the present invention for the following reasons. In particular, the consumer shopper system of McCollum allows users to search for coupons by using categories and keywords so that the users can identify and display advertisements and items from particular merchants based on the search results of the user-entered categories and keywords (see paragraphs [0018] and [0059]).

Furthermore, McCollum merely discloses that after a user has sent a coupon creation request after the user has found a particular product or merchant based on the user-entered categories and keywords, the commerce server 23 reviews merchant and product IDs and then creates a coupon (see paragraph [0084]).

However, similar to Holman, McCollum clearly does not disclose or suggest an input acceptor for <u>accepting program related information</u> as a user input, and <u>determining whether or not the program related information inputted by the user matches program related information supplied from a provider of the program contents</u>, as recited in claim 7.

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Instead, McCollum merely discloses that the commerce server 23, as an interface between merchants and users, allows users to search for coupon information based on categories and keywords and then informs the users of any merchants that match the user-entered categories or keywords. In addition, the commerce server 23 merely receives coupon creation requests and forwards such requests to the merchant server 26 to allow the merchant to determine whether it will create the requested coupons.

McCollum, however, clearly does not disclose or suggest an input acceptor for accepting program related information as a user input, and determining whether or not the program related information inputted by the user matches program related information supplied from a provider of the program contents, as recited in claim 7.

Furthermore, similar to Holman, McCollum clearly does not disclose or suggest a viewing information recorder for recording, on a removable recording medium, viewing information having the program identifier to identify the program contents when the input acceptor determines that the program related information inputted by the user matches the program related information supplied from the provider of the program contents, as recited in claim 7.

Accordingly, for at least the foregoing reasons, the Applicants respectfully submit that Holman and McCollum each fail to disclose or suggest the input acceptor and viewing information recorder as recited in claim 7. Similarly, the Applicants respectfully submit that Holman and McCollum each fail to disclose or suggest the accepting, determining and recording operations of claims 14 and 16 corresponding to the input acceptor and viewing information recorder of claim 7.

Therefore, no obvious combination of Holman and McCollum would result in the invention of claims 7, 14 and 16 since Holman and McCollum, either individually or in combination, clearly fail to disclose or suggest each and every limitation of claims 7, 14 and 16.

Furthermore, it is submitted that the clear distinctions discussed above are such that a person having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made would not have been motivated to modify Holman and McCollum in such a manner as to result in, or otherwise render obvious, the present invention as recited in claims 7, 14 and 16.

Therefore, the Applicants respectfully submit that claims 7, 14 and 16 are clearly

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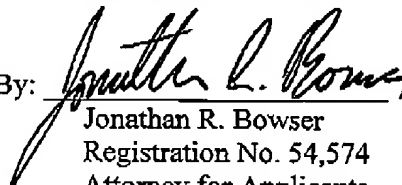allowable over the prior art as applied by the Examiner.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is clearly in condition for allowance. An early notice thereof is respectfully solicited.

If, after reviewing this Amendment, the Examiner feels there are any issues remaining which must be resolved before the application can be passed to issue, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned by telephone in order to resolve such issues.

A fee and a Petition for a one-month Extension of Time are filed herewith pursuant to 37 CFR § 1.136(a).

Respectfully submitted,

Keisei YAMAMURO et al.

By: _____
Jonathan R. Bowser
Registration No. 54,574
Attorney for Applicants

JRB/nrj
Washington, D.C. 20006-1021
Telephone (202) 721-8200
Facsimile (202) 721-8250
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